

Message Text

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SUBJECT: DIEGO GARCIA -- CONGRESSIONAL STATUS

E:

UNCLAS 7195

FROM OASD/PA

FOR INFORMATION AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICERS

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE MORNING NEWS BRIEFING

PART I: DOD MORNING NEWS BRIEFING THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1974,
11 A.M. (THIS IS NOT A VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT)

1. ON THE HILL THE DOD GENERAL COUNSEL, MARTIN HOFFMANN, IS
TESTIFYING AT OPEN SESSION OF THE SENATE JUDICIARY SUBCOMMITTEE
CONCERNING THE PRESIDENT'S CLEMENCY PROGRAM. COPIES OF HIS STATE-
MENT ARE AVAILABLE.

2. WE HAVE AVAILABLE THE CHRISTMAS MESSAGES TO THE MILITARY
PERSONNEL AROUND THE WORLD FROM THE PRESIDENT, SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS-

3. YESTERDAY THE NAVY ANNOUNCED IN SAN DIEGO, HONOLULU AND GUAM
AN INDEFINITE DELAY OF PLANS TO CHANGE THE HOMEPORTING OF SIX SHIPS
TO GUAM UNDER THE NAVY'S OVERSEAS FAMILY RESIDENCE PROGRAM. IN
OTHER WORDS, THIS IS BEING POSTPONED INDEFINITELY. WE HAD ALREADY
ANNOUNCED THAT WE WERE GOING TO DO THIS. THERE ARE TWO MAIN REASONS
ONE IS THE OVERRIDING NEED FOR PERSONNEL STABILIZATION WITHIN THE
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NAVY, PLUS THE SAVINGS WHICH WILL ACCRUE: NAMELY, 2.7 MILLION IN
PERSONNEL MOVING COSTS. THIS DOESN'T DOWNGRADE GUAM IN ANY SENSE.
IT'S JUST A REASONABLE THING TO DO AT THIS TIME, BUDGET; CON-
STRAINTS, ETC.

4. AT 12 45 TODAY THERE WILL BE A WHITE HOUSE CEREMONY FOR GENERAL GOODPASTER IN WHICH HE'LL BE AWARDED THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL.

5. YESTERDAY THE B-1 COMPLETED SUCCESSFULLY THE HIGH-SPEED TAXI TESTS AND ALL OBJECTIVES OF THE TESTS WERE ACHIEVED. IN FACT, THE TWO TESTS THAT THEY RAN WERE SO SUCCESSFUL THEY DIDN'T HAVE TO RUN THE THIRD ONE THAT THEY WERE ORIGINALLY PLANNING. THIS WILL CLEAR THE WAY, NOT COMPLETELY, BUT VERY CLOSE TO THE ACTUAL FLIGHT TEST WHICH WE EXPECT THIS MONTH. YOU HEARD THE CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE AIR FORCE SAY HE DIDN'T WANT TO GO UNTIL HE WAS COMPLETELY READY- THAT TIME IS APPROACHING.

Q: THIS IS THE LAST MAJOR TEST BEFORE THE ACTUAL TAKEOFF?

A: RIGHT.

Q WHY CAN'T YOU SET A DAY OF THE FLIGHT TEST?

A: THE AIR FORCE WILL SET THE DATE, BUT THEY HAVEN'T SET IT YET. YOU WILL REMEMBER, WHEN GENERAL JONES WAS DOWN HERE, HE SAID HE WAS GOING TO BE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN THAT EVERYTHING WAS DONE SO THE THING WAS SURELY READY. IN FACT, AS I REMEMBER, HE SAID IF THEY WAKE UP IN THE MORNING AND THE PILOT HAS A HEADACHE, HE'S GOING TO CALL THE TEST OFF. HE WANTS TO MAKE SURE THAT THIS GOES AND I DON'T BLAME HIM A BIT. BUT WE'LL GIVE YOU NOTICE.

6. YOU ASKED YESTERDAY: WHAT KINDS OF AMMUNITION ARE THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE FORCES HAVING TO CUT BACK? ARE EITHER 105 MM HOWITZER AMMO OR AIRCRAFT BOMBING LOADS INVOLVED?

BECAUSE OF REDUCTIONS IN FUNDING FOR VIETNAM THIS FISCAL YEAR, IT HAS BEEN NECESSARY FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM TO INSTITUTE STRICT TIONING OF AMMUNITION. RATIONING HAS BEEN INSTITUTED FOR ALL TYPES OF AIR AND GROUND AMMUNITION- DESPITE THE RELATIVELY HIGH LEVEL OF COMBAT DURING THE PAST FEW MONTHS, THE CONSERVATION MEASURES HAVE ALLOWED THE VIETNAMESE TO RETAIN A STOCKAGE FOR THE CURRENT LEVEL OF HOSTILITIES. HOWEVER, SHOULD THE TEMPO OF FIGHTING INCREASE, THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE WILL BE FORCED TO DRAW DOWN SIGNIFICANTLY FROM CURRENT STOCKAGE.

Q DO THEY HAVE ENOUGH TO GET THROUGH THE DRY SEASON?

A THIS IS ALL GOING TO DEPEND ON THE LEVEL OF ACTIVITY. THEY ARE NOT IN CRUCIAL, BAD CONDITION, BUT IT COULD OCCUR.

Q: GETTING BACK TO THOSE B-1 TAXI TESTS, DO YOU HAVE ANY UNCLASSIFIED

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INFORMATION THE DURATION OF THE TESTS OR THE SPEED?

A I THINK THE MAXIMUM SPEED WAS 135 KNOTS AN HOUR. THE AIR FORCE DESK HAS THE DETAILS.

Q: A WHILE BACK WE WERE TOLD THAT MR. ELLSWORTH, ASD/ISA, WAS GOING TO BELGRADE FOR DISCUSSIONS ON POSSIBLE FURTHER EXPANSION OF MILITARY RELATIONSHIPS. DID ANYTHING COME OF THAT?

A: WE HAVE NOTHING FIRM ON THAT. I NOTICED ON THE WIRES SOMETHING OUT OF BELGRADE SAYING THAT THINGS ARE LOOKING UP, BUT THIS IS A PRESS REPORT. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING OFFICIAL ON IT.

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT ON THE ACTION OF THE CONGRESS YESTERDAY CUTTING OUT THE FUNDS FOR DIEGO GARCIA?

A LET ME EXPLAIN THAT TO YOU- I THINK THERE'S SOME CONFUSION. THE CONGRESS SAID, IN THE FIRST PLACE, THE PRESIDENT DOES HAVE TO

ISSUE A CERTIFICATE OF REQUIREMENT, AND THIS HE CAN DO AT HIS CONVENIENCE. IN ANY CASE, IF HE DOES IT, THE 60-DAY PERIOD THEY TALKED ABOUT WON'T BEGIN UNTIL THE BEGINNING OF CONGRESS. IF HE ISSUES THE CERTIFICATE SUBSEQUENT TO THAT DATE IT WILL BE 60 DAYS FROM THAT DATE. SO SINCE CONGRESS IS GOING TO START ON THE 14TH OF JANUARY, THAT'D BE THE EARLIEST DATE THAT THE 60 DAYS WOULD START COUNTING. THE REPORT SAYS THAT EITHER HOUSE WITHIN THE 60-DAY PERIOD CAN VOTE THAT NO MONEY WILL BE SPENT ON DIEGO GARCIA. IF THAT IS SO VOTED, NO MONEY WILL BE SPENT ON DIEGO GARCIA. IF, HOWEVER, THE 60-DAY PERIOD PASSES AND A NEGATIVE VOTE IS NOT TAKEN, OR IF IT'S TAKEN AND IT COMES OUT AFFIRMATIVE, EITHER WAY, THEN THE NAVY IS PERMITTED TO REPROGRAM WITHOUT SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS \$14-8 MILLION FOR THE INITIATION OF THE ENLARGEMENT OF DIEGO GARCIA- THE AIR FORCE IS PERMITTED TO USE ITS \$3.3 MILLION. NOW THEY WOULD HAVE TO TAKE THIS OUT OF OTHER FUNDS. UNDER THIS BILL, THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE GETS NO MONEY FOR DIEGO GARCIA BUT WE CAN, IN ESSENCE, 'TAKE IT OUT OF OUR HIDE' WITHOUT GOING BACK TO CONGRESS AND ASKING TO REPROGRAM IT.

Q: EVEN IF EITHER HOUSE VOTES NEGATIVELY; IT DOESN'T TAKE BOTH HOUSES?

A: IF EITHER HOUSE VOTES NEGATIVELY, IT'S DEAD. WE CAN'T REPROGRAM, WE CAN'T SPEND THE MONEY-

Q IT ONLY TAKES ONE HOUSE?

A: ONE HOUSE WILL DO IT.

Q WHAT WAS REQUESTED ORIGINALLY?

A THE AIR FORCE REQUESTED \$3.3 AND THEY GOT THAT. THE NAVY REQUESTED \$29 MILLION.

Q I THOUGHT ALL THE FUNDS WERE CUT OUT?

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A: THERE WILL BE NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS. IN OTHER WORDS, THE CONGRESS IS NOT APPROPRIATING ANY OF THIS MONEY. WHAT THEY'RE SAYING TO THE AIR FORCE AND THE NAVY IS, YOU CAN 'TAKE THIS OUT OF YOUR HIDE' FROM SOME PLACE AND GO AHEAD WITH IT IF NEITHER HOUSE VOTES NAY AND IF THE PRESIDENT OF COURSE CERTIFIES THAT THIS IS NECESSARY IN THE NATIONAL DEFENSE.

Q: WHAT SENATOR MANSFIELD'S TRYING TO DO REALLY IS POSTPONE THE ISSUE UNTIL NEXT YEAR AND THEN IT'LL BE JOINED NEXT YEAR?

A: THAT'S WHAT WE ASSUME, RIGHT.

Q: BUT YOU HAVE TO WAIT 60 DAYS AFTER . . .

A: WE HAVE TO WAIT 60 DAYS AFTER EITHER THE BEGINNING OF CONGRESS OR THE STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT, WHICHEVER IS LATER. IN OTHER WORDS, IF HE DOESN'T GET AROUND TO DO IT UNTIL THE 18TH, THEN IT'LL BE 60 DAYS FROM THE 18TH OF JANUARY.

Q: BUT THEY CANNOT PROCEED IMMEDIATELY WITH PLANS?

A: NO.

Q: DOES THIS MEAN THE CONSTRUCTION WORK STOPS AT DIEGO GARCIA?

A NO, THE PREVIOUSLY FUNDED CONSTRUCTION CAN CONTINUE. THIS IS THE NEW MONEY.

Q WE HAVE BEEN EXPANDING DIEGO GARCIA?

A: YES, FROM A PREVIOUS AUTHORIZATION. I'LL HAVE TO GET EXACTLY WHAT THAT WAS. WE HAVE, FOR INSTANCE, A BATTALION OF SEABEES DOWN

THERE RIGHT NOW, BUT THEY'RE NOT WORKING ON WHAT WE'VE ASKED THE MONEY FOR, NAMELY, TO EXPAND THE RUNWAY, TO BUILD A POL STORAGE AND A COUPLE OF WAREHOUSES, SOME PARKING SPACE FOR AIRPLANES, ETC. THAT'S WHAT THIS NEW MONEY WAS FOR- NONE OF THAT IS GOING ON. AS I UNDERSTAND IT, THE \$14.8 MILLION IS PRIMARILY FOR THE POL STORAGE AND THE RUNWAY EXPANSION ONLY. IN OTHER WORDS, THAT WOULD BE THE FIRST THING WE WOULD DO IF THIS IS NOT DISAPPROVED-

Q: WHAT IS THE REMAINDER OF THE MONEY FOR?

A: THE OTHER THINGS I MENTIONED -- THE WAREHOUSING, THE EXTRA PARKING; AS I UNDERSTAND IT, THE AIRSTRIP AS IT STANDS NOW DOESN'T HAVE MUCH SPARE ROOM; THE PARKING APRON IS SMALL.

Q: BUT THERE'S NO IDEA WHERE THIS \$13.8 MILLION OR \$3.3 MILLION WILL COME FROM?

A: IT WILL COME OUT OF THE SERVICES' HIDE SOMEWHERE. OF COURSE, THEY'D HAVE TO MAKE THAT DECISION. THE INTERESTING FEATURE IS THEY DON'T HAVE TO GO BACK AND GET REPROGRAM AUTHORITY FOR IT.

Q IF THAT MONEY IS DENIED, ARE YOU GOING TO WAIT AROUND A YEAR AND START THIS THING UP AGAIN? CAN YOU WAIT A YEAR?

A I DON'T KNOW IF THAT DECISION HAS BEEN ADDRESSED. I'M SURE UNCLASSIFIED

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SOMEBODY'S THINKING ABOUT IT.

Q: I MEAN, YOU'D HAVE TO STOP EVERYTHING?

A: AFTER THEY'VE RUN OF WHAT'S ALREADY AUTHORIZED, THEY WOULD HAVE TO STOP.

Q: DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH HAS BEEN AUTHORIZED?

A: WE CAN FIND THAT OUT.

Q: IS IT THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT POLICY TO USE MILITARY BUSES TO TRANSPORT CHILDREN OF MILITARY FAMILIES TO PRIVATE SCHOOLS AND PARTICULARLY THE PRIVATE SCHOOLS THAT ARE SEGREGATED? IS THAT PERMISSIBLE UNDER DEFENSE DEPARTMENT POLICIES?

A THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT POLICY IN THAT REGARD IS CURRENTLY UNDERGOING REVIEW. I'D HAVE TO CHECK ON THE SEGREGATED PART, BUT THE POLICY IS AT THE PRESENT TIME TO DO THIS IN SPECIAL CASES. BUT THE ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION EXCEPT FOR THE DESEGREGATED SCHOOLS WHICH I DON'T KNOW ABOUT, IS YES AT THE PRESENT TIME AND IT IS BEING LOOKED AT WITH THE MIND THAT MAYBE IT SHOULDN'T BE.

Q: SINCE THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS THAT ARE SERVING, EDUCATING MILITARY CHILDREN, ARE RECEIVING FEDERAL IMPACT AID, WHY CANNOT THEY PICK UP THE COST OF TRANSPORTING THE KIDS? WHY MUST WE, THE TAXPAYERS PAY?

A: I DON'T KNOW OF ANY CASES WHERE WE'RE RUNNING BUSES TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Q: JUST TO PRIVATE SCHOOLS?

A: YES, I THINK THAT'S RIGHT.

Q: IF AN ORDINARY CITIZEN, SUCH AS ME (JOHN FINNEY, NYTIMES), MAKES A DECISION THAT I AM GOING TO SEND MY CHILD TO PRIVATE SCHOOL, I GIVE UP ALL OF THE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION PROVIDED BY THE PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM. WHY SHOULD THAT SAME PRINCIPLE NOT APPLY FOR MILITARY FAMILIES?

A THIS IS A COMPLICATED ISSUE. OF COURSE, IT DEPENDS ON THE SITUATION. IN SOME LOCATIONS AROUND THE COUNTRY THEY HAVE WORKED

OUT ARRANGEMENTS WHERE THE FUNDING OF THE SCHOOL BUS IS SHARED, AND IN OTHER PLACES THE DISTANCES INVOLVED ARE SUCH THAT THERE REALLY ISN'T ANY OTHER SOLUTION BUT TO USE A GOVERNMENT BUS. THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT RAMIFICATIONS. BUT TAKING THE CASE YOU RAISED TO START WITH -- WHICH WOULD BE THE MOST OBVIOUS CASE, I THINK, WHERE MAYBE WE SHOULDN'T DO IT -- WHERE SOME OTHER KIND OF EDUCATION IS READILY AVAILABLE IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND THEREFORE SHOULD BUSES BE USED TO TRANSPORT KIDS TO SOME OTHER SCHOOL, THAT'S WHAT WE'RE LOOKING AT.

Q: DO YOU SEE ANY LINK BETWEEN THIS PAST PRACTICE ON BUSING AND UNCLASSIFIED

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A POLICY AMONG THE POLICY MAKERS OF THIS DEPARTMENT WHERE THEY PERMIT A SITUATION TO HAVE THE MEALS OF TOP OFFICIALS SUBSIDIZED BY THE TAXPAYERS?

A: I DON'T SEE THAT THERE'S MUCH CONNECTION THERE BUT YOU'RE ENTITLED TO YOUR OPINION. THESE ARE BEING ADDRESSED BY DIFFERENT GROUPS.

Q: WILL YOU TELL US WHEN YOU COMPLETE THIS REVIEW? THIS HAS COME UP IN A PARTICULAR SITUATION DOWN AT MAXWELL AFB, IN WHICH A U.S. ATTORNEY IS CLAIMING THE AIR FORCE IS TRANSPORTING CHILDREN TO AN ALL-WHITE PRIVATE SCHOOL-

A: I CAN'T ADDRESS THAT, I DON'T KNOW WHAT OUR REGULATIONS SAY. I JUST DOUBT THAT WE'RE DOING IT UNLESS BY ACCIDENT OR OVERSIGHT OR SOMETHING. I CAN TELL YOU THAT IT'S UNDER THOROUGH REVIEW AT THE PRESENT TIME. UNQTE SISCO

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